

## Upcoming Changes to 3G Wireless Network

### Did you know that service providers will be shutting down their 3G networks beginning in early 2022?

- The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has developed a [consumer guide](#) with more information on the 3G shutdown. Anticipated shutdown dates by provider include: **AT&T = on 2/22/22**; T-Mobile/Sprint = between March-July; and Verizon = by end of the year. Providers like Boost, Cricket, and Straight Talk also use the networks of the larger providers. The FCC encourages customers of any network to contact their carrier for more information. Many carriers may offer free or low-cost replacement phones or devices.
- This will affect **older devices** made for the 3G network, including but not limited to:
  - cell phones, tablets, **personal emergency response system devices**, smart watches, assistive technology devices with SIM cards (possibly older augmentative communication devices and braille note takers), certain medical devices, home alarm systems, and more
- These devices on 3G networks will not be able to send texts, use data, or make or receive phone calls, including calls to 9-1-1.
- These devices **may** still be able to access services via a public or personal Wi-Fi network.
- Some devices may only require a software update to enable VoLTE (HD Voice) or other advanced services.

### Older adults, people with disabilities, and people on fixed incomes may be affected.

#### What Can Consumers Do?

- Contact your or doctor for any concerns with a medical device; or your mobile provider, or the provider's website for more information about their 3G retirement plan.
- You may need to upgrade to a newer device to ensure that you can stay connected. Providers may be willing to help people upgrade if their current device is 3G; however, globally we are experiencing a microchip shortage – so could be shortages in general.
- Consumers with phones older than ~2013-2014, such as an iPhone 6 or a Samsung Galaxy S4 should contact their mobile carrier to determine if their device will be affected. To be safe, any device purchased before 2019 could be checked.
- If you purchased your phone independent of a mobile provider, you should be able to check whether your device is 4G LTE (with VoLTE or HD Voice) enabled by checking your phone's settings or user manual, or by searching your phone's model number on the internet, to determine whether you need to purchase a new device or install a software update.
- If you *did not* purchase your phone through a mobile provider, you may be able to check whether your device is 4G LTE (with VoLTE or HD Voice) enabled. This would help you determine if you need to purchase a new device or install a software update. To check, use your phone's settings and find the About Phone option. You can also search for this information in your phone's user manual or by searching your phone's model number on the Internet.

#### Additional Resources:

- **FCC** = <https://www.fcc.gov/consumers/guides/plan-ahead-phase-out-3g-cellular-networks-and-service>
- **FCC Consumer Guide** = [https://www.fcc.gov/sites/default/files/plan\\_ahead\\_for\\_3g\\_shutoff\\_consumer\\_guide.pdf?eType=EmailBlastContent&eld=f4cb656f-4eb6-4bd4-93e7-94e886c9d056](https://www.fcc.gov/sites/default/files/plan_ahead_for_3g_shutoff_consumer_guide.pdf?eType=EmailBlastContent&eld=f4cb656f-4eb6-4bd4-93e7-94e886c9d056)
- **AARP** = <https://www.aarp.org/home-family/personal-technology/info-2021/phone-companies-ending-3g-service.html>
- **Senior Planet**=<https://seniorplanet.org/3G/>  
[AT&T](#) info and resources  
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